Maryland Historical Trust Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Survey No. B-4955

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4 37					
1. Name					
Historic	8 – 20 North Bruce Str	-aat			
	8 – 20 North Bluce Sti	eei			
and / common					
2. Location					
street & number	8 – 20 North Bruce St	reet			
city, town	Baltimore				
state & zip code	Maryland 21205		county		
2 67 18					
3. Classifica	tion				
6		G.		D . II	
Category	Ownership	Status		Present Use	802Y072F43V4V4
district	public	X occupied	- 4	agriculture	museum
X building(s)	X private	unoccupie		commercial	park
structure	_ both	_ work in p	rogress	educational	X private residence
site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	00V7 - 4	entertainment	religious
object	_ in process	X yes: restri		government	scientific
	being considered	yes: unres	stricted	industrial	transportation
	not applicable	no		military	other:
4. Owner of	f Property				
4. Owner of	Troperty				
name					
street & number				teleph	one
city, town			state & zip	code	
5 Location	of Legal Descr	intion			
3. Location	of Eegal Desci	iption			
courthouse, registry of	f deeds, etc. Baltimore City	Land Records			liber
street & number		hell Courthouse			folio
city, town Baltime			State M	aryland	
6. Represen	tation in Exist	ing Histor	rical Si	urveys	
				-	
title					
date		federal	state	county	local
DEDUCTOR TO CHEVOU	PENTAG				

state & zip code

city, town

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7. Description

Condition		Check One	Check One
excellent _x_ good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered X altered	X original site moved: date of move:

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This row of seven two-story, two-bay wide brick houses with shed roofs and sheet metal cornices were built c. 1895 - 1900. With their high basement containing the kitchen, the houses are typical of a form found particularly in southwest Baltimore. All of the houses retain their original brick facades, which were always painted. The row has been completely renovated in recent years.

The houses are two stories in height, 12' wide and occupy lots 50' deep. Each house is two rooms deep and there is no backbuilding. The houses are constructed in common bond and were originally painted. Each house has a single hooded chimney located at the rear corner of the house. The shed roofs are capped by a simple sheet metal cornice.

The tall, narrow window and door openings have segmentally arched brick lintels, composed of a double row of headers, and stone sills. All of the houses have 1/1 replacement sash. Doorways have single-light transoms, and all doors are modern six-panel doors. The houses sit on high basements, lit by a single-light sash. Steps lead down from the sidewalk to the basement door. Each house is reached by five or six concrete steps, set parallel to the street.

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8. Significance

Area of significance	check one & justify		
archeology-prehistoric archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce communications	X community planningconservationeconomicseducationengineeringexplorationindustryinvention	landscape architecturelawliteraturemilitarymusicphilosophypolitics/government	religion science sculpture X social/ humanitarian theatre transportation other: specify
7	archeology-historic agriculture X architecture art commerce	archeology-historic conservation agriculture economics X architecture education art engineering commerce exploration communications industry	archeology-historic conservation law literature X architecture education military music commerce exploration philosophy communications industry politics/government

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This group of houses significant as representing the level of architectural stylishness builders were willing to give to small street houses in the late nineteenth century and is testament to the fact that their was no stigma attached to small street living. They represent a form of house particular to southwest Baltimore—only two rooms deep with the kitchen located in the basement—a design that allowed builders to build on much shorter lots. The houses were built according to a pattern that was quite common to the city's working class neighborhoods of the period c. 1870 to 1910. Recognizing that workers held different levels of jobs (and pay), builders created a hierarchy of house sizes (and prices) in the new neighborhoods going up to serve the expanding factory districts ringing the harbor and northeast and southwest of the central city. Builders acquired anywhere from an eighth to a half of a city block and built 14' to 15'-wide three-bay-wide, two-story houses on the main streets, and smaller, 11' to 13'-wide two-bay-wide, two-story houses on the narrower streets bisecting the blocks. Typically, in this period, main street houses might sell for \$1,200 - \$1,500; small street houses for \$700 - \$900.

Occasionally, the builder retained ownership of his small street houses to provide income for himself as rental properties. In this way people of varying means could afford to live in the same block. If they couldn't afford the approximately \$750 purchase price of the small street houses, then they *could* afford the \$8 or so a month it would cost to rent one, while they saved to be able to buy their own home later.

The houses are especially significant because of their proximity to the slaughterhouses of southwest Baltimore and their related industries, particularly the William Wilkens & Co. Curled Hair Manufactory, one of the largest employers in the area. A number of German-American owned breweries were also located in this section of the city. Moderately-priced housing was built to provide homes for the mainly German immigrants who came to southwest Baltimore to work in these rapidly expanding industries in the decades after the Civil War.

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9. Major Bibliographic References

Mary Ellen Hayward and Charles Belfoure, *The Baltimore Rowhouse* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 1999)

10. Geographic Data

Acreage of nominated property Quadrangle name	
Verbal boundary description and justification	

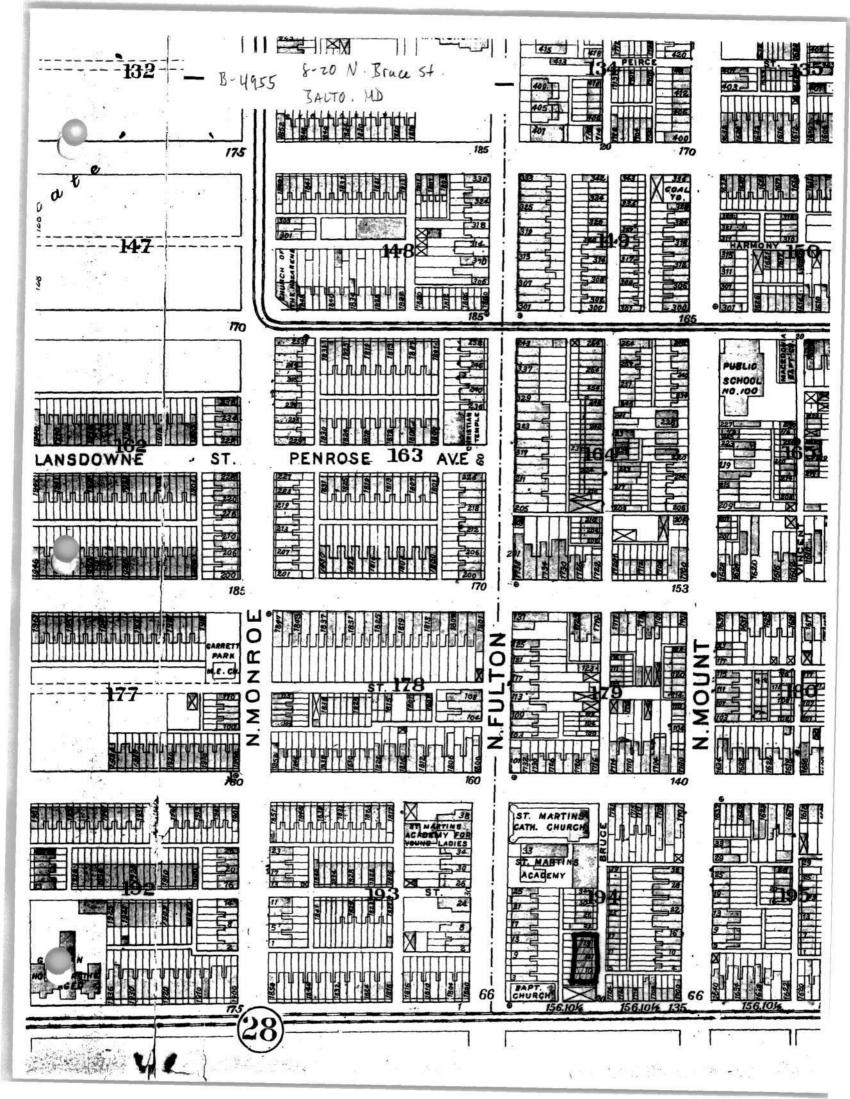
11. Form Prepared by

name / title Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward	
Organization The Alley House Project	date
street & number 1306 Carrollton Ave.	telephone
city, town Baltimore	state & zip code Maryland 21204

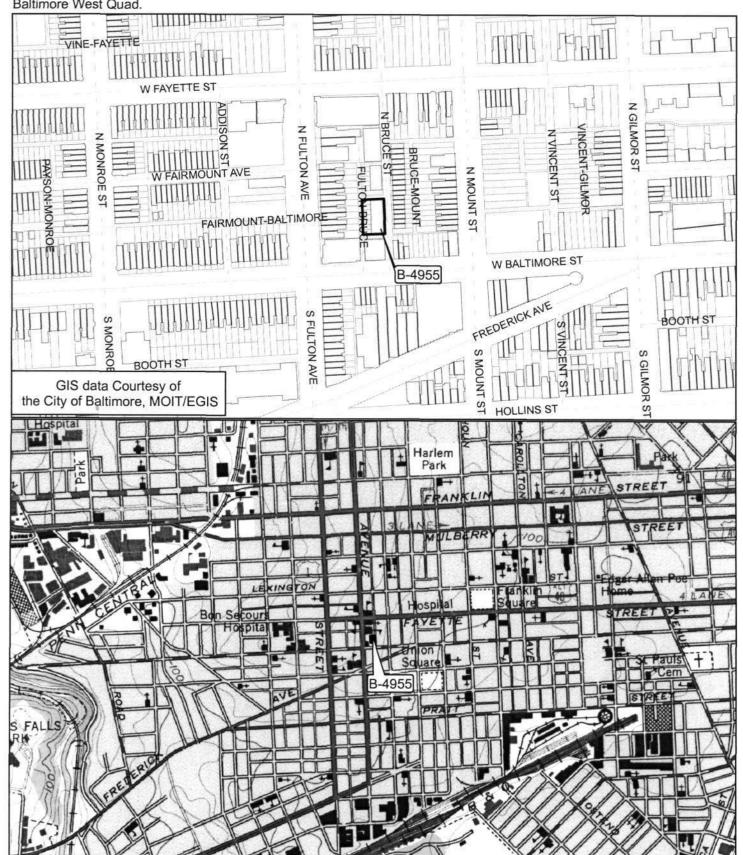
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotate Maryland, Article 41, section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement (rights.

Return to:
DHCP/DHCD
Maryland Historical Trust
100 Community Place
Crownsville MD 21032-2023



B-4955 8-20 N. Bruce Street Block 0194 Baltimore City Baltimore West Quad.





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